

The New Decade

January 8, 2010

Dear Constituents,

As we begin a new decade, we look with hope and optimism to the future and over our shoulder to measure the past. We face many more challenges at the beginning of this decade than we did at the start of the last. In 2000, our country was at peace and enjoyed a financial surplus and a flourishing economy.

Ten years later, our country is embroiled in two wars and has suffered the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, costing too many their jobs, their homes, their savings, and trillions of dollars in hard-earned income. The economic downturn has rippled through our Congressional District and across the country. As if this isn't enough, we face the extraordinary challenges of the ongoing threat of terrorism, and the effects of climate change.

Throughout the last year, the first in 14 years without a Republican majority, I've been working hard to repair the damage done in the last decade to our economy, our international reputation, our security and our planet, and to equip our nation to better address these critical issues in the decade ahead. While we have a great deal of work to do, I'm very proud of what we've accomplished in the House of Representatives in 2009. In many ways, it was a year of sweeping changes and landmark legislation that re-set the course of the nation.

Last January, we passed legislation that averted another Depression. In June, the House passed wide-ranging climate change legislation. In September, we approved the largest single increase to student aid in history. In November, we passed healthcare reform, legislation that has been delayed, blocked and thwarted for decades. In December, we instituted financial reforms to bring accountability to Wall Street. And in the final vote of 2009, we passed a jobs creation bill that will reallocate \$75 billion in TARP funds for small business lending, infrastructure projects, and jobs in education.

Our actions saved an American economy on the brink of total collapse, set the course for recovery and laid a foundation for the next generation of economic growth and health.

Below are 20 bills that represent some of last year's achievements. The President has signed many of these bills into law, and some still await a vote in the Senate. I hope they will act expeditiously to pass these measures for the betterment of our country.

Economic Recovery and Job Creation

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, enacted in the first month of President Obama's term to jumpstart our economy, created and saved 3.5 million jobs, gave 95% of American workers a tax cut, and began to rebuild America's road, rail, and water infrastructure. (Signed into Law)

Cash for Clunkers, gave a desperately needed boost to the U.S. auto industry, and the men and women who work in this critical sector, providing consumers with up to \$4,500 for trading in an old vehicle, for one with higher fuel efficiency. This bill spurred the sale of 700,000 vehicles and netted the economy \$25 billion. (Signed into Law)

Worker, Homeownership & Business Assistance Act, created jobs with unemployment benefits for Americans hit by the recession, expanded the first-time homebuyer tax credit, and provided tax relief for struggling small businesses. (Signed into Law)

Jobs on Main Street Act, a reinvestment of unspent TARP funds from Wall Street to Main Street to provide emergency aid for the unemployed, to create and save jobs with targeted investments to boost small business, to rebuild highways and transit, and to hire and retain teachers, police, and firefighters. (Passed by House)

Student Aid & Fiscal Responsibility Act, the largest investment in college aid in history, increases Pell Grants and keeps student-loan interest rates low while reducing the federal deficit. (Passed by House)

Helping

Families Save Their Homes Act, built on the President's initiative to stem the foreclosure crisis, provides significant incentives to lenders, servicers, and homeowners to modify loans. (Signed into Law)

Affordable, Quality Healthcare

Health Insurance Reform, lowers costs to consumers, preserves and provides choice of doctors and health plans including a public option, ensures peace of mind that coverage cannot be delayed or denied, and expands access to affordable health coverage for millions of Americans. (Passed by House - Senate Passed Separate Version)

Health Care

for 11 Million Children, provides cost-effective health coverage for 4 million children and preserves coverage for 7 million children already enrolled. (Signed into Law)

Food

Safety, fundamentally changes the way we protect our food supply, closes gaps exposed by recent food-borne illness outbreaks, and gives the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) new regulatory authorities. (Passed by House)

FDA

Regulation of Tobacco, grants the FDA authority to regulate advertising, marketing, and manufacturing of tobacco products, the leading cause of preventable U.S. death. (Signed into Law)

Veterans Health Care Budget Reform & Transparency Act, authorizes

Congress to approve VA medical care appropriations one year in advance to ensure reliable and timely funding. (Signed into Law)

Clean Energy Jobs and Conservation

American Clean Energy and Security Act, another landmark achievement sets the course for American energy innovation and independence, spurring the creation of millions of jobs in new, clean technology industries, reduces dependence on foreign oil, reduces climate change pollution, and keeps costs low for Americans. (Passed by House)

Omnibus
Public Land Management Act,
the most significant conservation bill in 15 years strengthens tourism and rural economies with more than 2 million new acres of wilderness and parks. (Signed into Law)

Fiscal Responsibility

Budget
Blueprint, creates
jobs with investments in health care, clean energy and education; cuts taxes for most Americans by \$1.5 trillion; cuts the Bush deficit by more than half by 2013. (Action Completed)

Statutory Pay-As-You-Go, restores the 1990s law that turned record deficits into surpluses, by forcing tough choices. Under this law, Congress must pay for any new expenditures by cutting other spending. (Passed by House)

Protecting Consumers and Taxpayers

Wall Street Reform & Consumer Protection Act, means long-overdue reform on Wall Street to end taxpayer-funded bailouts, requires new levels of accountability and responsibility on 'too big to fail' financial institutions, and protects consumers from predatory lending. (Passed by House)

Credit
Cardholders' Bill of Rights, provides tough new protections for consumers, including banning unfair rate increases, abusive fees and penalties, and strengthens enforcement. (Signed into Law)

Fraud

Enforcement & Recovery Act, provides tools to prosecute mortgage scams and corporate fraud that contributed to the financial crisis and created an outside commission to examine the causes of the crisis. (Signed into Law)

Defense
Procurement Reform, cracks
down on Pentagon waste and cost overruns.
(Signed into Law)

Lilly
Ledbetter Fair Pay Act,
restores the rights of women and other workers to challenge unfair pay-to help
close the wage gap where a woman earns 78 cents for every \$1 a man earns in America. (Signed
into Law)

Stronger
TARP Oversight, expands the authority of TARP's Special Inspector General to increase the oversight
for this program. (Signed into Law)

It was a tough decade culminating in a hard year of
extraordinary challenges. During that
time, you have been on my mind every day, as has my responsibility to work hard
for you to provide economic health and stability, meaningful healthcare reform,
a cleaner planet and a safer nation.

The
quantity and scope of legislation we undertook this past year is unparalleled
in the last half-century. Some of the
results are already tangible-the stabilization of the financial sector and the
effects of the stimulus have mitigated the recession and slowed job losses from
700,000 during the last year of the Bush Administration to a trickle in the
final months of 2009. Other measures,
including the conservation of two million new acres of wilderness and parks,
will be a boon for future generations.

Despite last year's legislative achievements, far more is
required. Unemployment remains at an
unacceptable level and our economy still needs serious improvement. We also must focus on the challenges of this
decade, while continuing to contend with issues from the last. I fully expect to sustain the same fast pace
this year as we did in the last, and to exceed our level of achievement. Ensuring a successful decade will require no
less.

Still, at the dawn of a new decade and as befits our extraordinary
Congressional District, I look forward to these continuing challenges and the

new opportunities to represent the most innovative and creative constituents anywhere in this nation.

With my respect and gratitude,

Anna G. Eshoo

Member of Congress